

# The Medical Waste Reporter



*Announcements for Wisconsin's Medical Waste Generators*

Reporting year 1999

January 2000

## Are Your Infectious Waste Annual Reports Complete?

Nearly three-fourths of the 600 infectious waste annual reports DNR received in 1999 (for 1998) were incomplete. DNR will be contacting you regarding these reports because they cannot be entered into the computer until they are complete.

To avoid getting your next (1999) annual report sent back, please follow the form's line-by-line instructions, especially for Part III of the form, the report on medical waste reduction. If you have any questions about how to fill out the form, please contact the DNR Medical Waste Coordinator, Barb Derflinger. (See page 2 for contact information.)

## Calling all missing reports

During 1998, DNR sent back for correction literally hundreds of original annual reports for the reporting years 1995, 1996 and/or 1997. Many of these original reports have not been returned to DNR. If you find any original annual report forms (i.e., forms with an original signature on the back) in your files, please correct them as requested and return them to Barb Derflinger at DNR as soon as possible.

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- Missing annual reports
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## Time to Repeat Waste Audits

When was the last time you audited your waste? If you have never done it, or if it has been a few years, it's time! It's also time to review your medical waste reduction plan, which must be completely updated at least once every five years.

Don't know how to do a waste audit or review a waste reduction plan? Refer to the medical waste rule, sections NR 526.18 and .19, Wis. Admin. Code. Copies of the rule are available from DNR. By addressing all the items in the rule, your waste reduction plan will save you the most money and make your facility a model of success.



## Environmental Purchasing

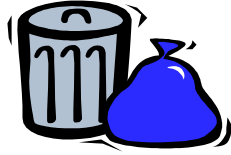
You may call it "environmentally responsible." Or you may just call it "green." But the Massachusetts Office of Technical Assistance for Toxics Use Reduction (OTA) can help you do it. The OTA has just begun publishing a newsletter, the *Health Care Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Information Exchange*. This newsletter will come out every other month and feature short news blurbs on recent developments in environmental purchasing for health care.

The newsletter is available in hard copy and electronic formats. If you wish to subscribe to the hardcopy "snail mail" version (free at this point), please email, call, or write to:

Lara Sutherland  
Mass. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs  
Office of Tech Assistance, Toxics Use Reduction  
100 Cambridge Street, #2109  
Boston, Massachusetts 02202  
Phone: 617-626-1091 Fax: 617-626-1095

If you wish to receive the electronic version, send email to [Lara.Sutherland@state.ma.us](mailto:Lara.Sutherland@state.ma.us).

## Need Help Managing Wastes?



The UW-Extension Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC) provides free technical assistance in managing wastes. For questions about medical waste or mercury reduction, contact Steve Brachman in Milwaukee at (414) 227-3160 or [brachman@uwm.edu](mailto:brachman@uwm.edu). You may also want to check out their website at <http://shwec.uwsp.edu>.

## Mercury Recycling Programs

Eight Wisconsin communities are participating in the latest Wisconsin Mercury Recycling Program. The program allows medical facilities and others to recycle mercury and mercury-containing products and equipment for free or at a low cost.

The new program builds on the success of the 1998 "Mercury Roundup" which gathered over 5,000 pounds of mercury for recycling. The community programs are partially funded with a matching grant from DNR.

The eight communities and contact persons are:

- Appleton: Shane Brooks, 920-832-5945
- Green Bay: Dan Busch, 920-438-1039
- Kenosha: Bruce Rabe, 414-653-4335
- Marinette: Jeff Mayou, 715-732-5180
- Madison: Ralph Erickson, 608-222-1201 ext. 362 or Dale Cardwell, 608-294-5366
- Milwaukee area (Metropolitan Sewerage District): Tom Nowicki, 414-225-2275
- Racine: Nora Erlandson, 414-636-9523
- Superior: Diane Thompson, 715-394-0392 extension 131.

Several of the communities will recycle mercury-containing products from outside their service areas as well. Give them a call.

For information about mercury reduction and recycling in Wisconsin or about how your community might start a mercury collection program, contact Randy Case (see contact box).

## Mercury Workshops a Success

A highly successful "Reducing Mercury in Health Care" workshop was held on October 1, 1999, at Children's Hospital in Milwaukee. Forty-two health care staff; including doctors, nurses, safety coordinators, lab staff and waste managers, learned how to phase out mercury-containing products in healthcare.

This workshop built upon the success of a similar program held in Superior in November 1998.

Both workshops addressed why mercury is both important and toxic, uses of mercury in healthcare, how to develop and implement a mercury reduction program, examples of healthcare facilities which have eliminated mercury and how to manage mercury spills.

Continuing assistance on reducing mercury is being offered to workshop participants by Steve Brachman at the UW Extension Solid and Hazardous Waste Education Center, based on a self-assessment form that participants completed during the Milwaukee workshop.



**A third mercury reduction workshop for medical facilities will be held in the Fox Valley in May or June 2000.** If you are interested in attending, contact Randy Case of the DNR (see contact box).

### HOW TO CONTACT DNR STAFF:

#### *Medical waste questions:*

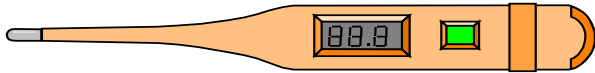
Barb Derflinger, Medical Waste Coordinator  
Phone: (608) 267-3548 Fax: (608) 267-2768  
Email: [medwaste@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:medwaste@dnr.state.wi.us)  
Address: DNR WA/3, PO Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921

#### *Mercury questions:*

Randy Case, Health Care Sector Specialist  
Phone: (608) 267-7639 Fax: (608) 267-0496  
Email: [casec@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:casec@dnr.state.wi.us)  
Address: DNR CO/8, PO Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921

## Hg Thermometer Roundups

In September, "Mercury thermometer round-ups" were held at nine hospitals around Lake Superior to help hospital staff dispose of mercury fever thermometers from their homes. Over 600 thermometers were turned in.



Ashland Community Hospital, St. Mary's Hospital (Superior) and Spooner Memorial Hospital participated in Wisconsin. The other six facilities were located in Minnesota and Canada.

Also in September, Group Health Cooperative of South Central Wisconsin collected over 4,000 mercury thermometers from its members.

## NEW RESOURCES

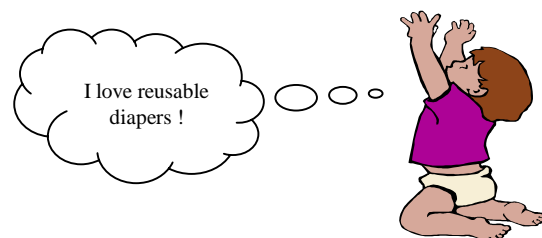
- **Reducing Mercury Use in Health Care/Promoting a Healthier Environment: A How-to Manual** Monroe County Department of Health, 1999. Contact: Carole Beale, 111 Westfield Road, PO Box 92832, Rochester, NY 14692. Phone: (716) 292-3935. Email: cbeal@rochester.lib.ny.us Electronic copy: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/bns/merchealth/>.
- **Sustainable hospitals website** created by The Lowell Center for Sustainable Production of the University of Massachusetts--Lowell. Provides health care personnel with tools, training and technical support to improve the environmental practices of healthcare facilities. Web address: <http://www.uml.edu/centers/LCSP/hospitals/>.
- **Health Care Without Harm E-mail listserv** for health care environmental leaders and for those in health care who purchase, use, or dispose of products or waste from health care. The email discussion group serves as a forum for inquiries and information sharing. For example, if you want to replace mercury-containing Miller-Abbot tubes, you can ask members of the list about non-mercury alternatives. To subscribe, send email to [listserv@iatp.org](mailto:listserv@iatp.org) and write in the body of the text "subscribe iatp-hcwh".

- **Wisconsin DNR web site.** Includes links to administrative codes and statutes, the Wisconsin Recycling Markets Directory and publications about medical waste, pollution prevention and hazardous waste management. <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/>

These and other new resources can be found in DNR's "**References: Health Care and Medical Waste**" (revised 1999). The reference list tells where to obtain the latest information about reducing medical waste and mercury. Request the updated list using the enclosed "Response Sheet".

## Baby Derflinger Arrives

Barb Derflinger's daughter Aralee arrived on January 11, 1999. Before delivery, Aralee's mother reportedly bit her tongue several times when medical residents put non-infectious items in the red bag, but she commends the hospital for labeling waste containers and for giving out digital, rather than mercury, thermometers. Aralee is now taking her first unaided steps and keeping mom busy.



## AHA/EPA MOU on MWR

No, these are not Aralee's first words. The above stands for the American Hospital Association and the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Memorandum of Understanding on Medical Waste Reduction, which was signed last year. The MOU sets goals of reducing medical waste by 50% by the year 2010 and eliminating the use of mercury in healthcare by 2005. The MOU is available from AHA or can be found at the USEPA's Mercury Page at [http://www.epa.gov/toxteam/trt\\_merc.htm](http://www.epa.gov/toxteam/trt_merc.htm).

The AHA will release guidance for reducing mercury, including a model mercury waste reduction plan, early in 2000. For more information about the MOU or the guidance, check this web site (<http://www.ashes.org/>, click on "news" and "publications") occasionally or call AHA at (800) AHA-2626.

## Mercury Reduction Honor Roll

*The following medical facilities report they are virtually mercury-free:*

- Aurora Health Care, DePere
- Baldwin Hospital, Baldwin
- Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- Christian Community Home, Hudson
- General Motors Plant Medical Dept., Janesville
- Grant Regional Health Center, Lancaster
- Green Bay Clinic/Aurora Health Care, Green Bay
- Group Health Cooperative Clinics (3), Madison
- Hudson Physicians Clinic, Hudson
- Medical Consultants, Milwaukee
- Medical Surgical Clinic (AMG), Milwaukee
- Midwest Dialysis Center, Oak Creek
- New Richmond Clinic, New Richmond
- Tomah Memorial Hospital, Tomah
- UW Health Crossroads Clinic, Oxford
- Waupaca Family Medicine, Waupaca

*The following medical facilities report they are reducing the use of mercury:*

- Agnesian Health Center, Fond du Lac
- Allergy & Asthma Clinic of Milwaukee, S.C.
- Associated Physicians, LLP, Madison
- Attic Angel Health Center, Madison
- Barron Medical Center, Barron
- Beloit Clinic, Beloit
- Bradford V. Eneix, DDS, Beloit
- Cedar Lake Health Care Center, West Bend
- Curative Rehabilitation, Milwaukee
- Dean Clinics, all locations
- Duluth Clinic, Ashland
- Edgewater Haven Nursing Home, Port Edwards
- Family Health Medical & Dental Center, Wautoma
- Family Health Plan, Milwaukee
- FMC N.E. Wisconsin, Neenah
- Froedtert Memorial Hospital, Milwaukee
- Gunderson-Lutheran Hospital, LaCrosse
- Hartford Memorial Hospital, Hartford
- Hudson Medical Center, Hudson
- Kennedy Park Medical & Rehab. Center, Schofield
- Kenosha County Health Department, Kenosha

- Kenosha Hospital, Kenosha
- Lois J. Jacobs, MD PhD, Oshkosh
- Luther-Midelfort Hospital, Eau Claire
- Madison Medical Affiliates, Inc, Milwaukee
- Marinette-Menomonie Clinic, Marinette
- Marquette University, Milwaukee
- Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
- Meriter Hospitals, Madison
- Midelfort Clinic, Bloomer
- Milwaukee County Health Department
- Mulder Health Care Facility, West Salem
- New London Family Medical Center, New London
- Northern Lake Service (laboratory), Crandon
- Northern WI Center, Chippewa Falls
- Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital, Oconomowoc
- Osseo Medical Clinic, Osseo
- Ozaukee Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Grafton
- Prairie du Chien Hospital, Prairie du Chien
- Reedsburg Area Medical Center, Reedsburg
- Riverview Hospital Association, Wisconsin Rapids
- St. Catherine's Hospital, Kenosha
- St. Clare Hospital & Health Services, Baraboo
- St. Joseph Hospital, Chippewa Falls
- St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center, Madison
- St. Mary's Hospital, Kewaunee
- St. Mary's Hospital, Milwaukee
- St. Mary's Hospital, Rhinelander
- The Monroe Clinic, Monroe and elsewhere
- TriCounty Memorial Hospital, WhiteHall
- UW - Whitewater Health Service, Whitewater
- UW Hospital and Clinics, Madison
- UW School of Nursing, Madison
- Visiting Nurse Association, West Allis
- Waukesha Memorial Hospital, Waukesha
- Wisconsin Dental Association members, statewide

## Congratulations ! ! ! ! !

If your medical facility should have been listed, please accept our sincere apologies and tell us about your progress in your infectious waste annual report.

These announcements were prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources for distribution with publication WA-802-99 (infectious waste annual report forms) in January 2000. Comments and questions can be directed to Barb Derflinger, DNR Medical Waste Coordinator, (608) 267-3548 or [medwaste@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:medwaste@dnr.state.wi.us)